

BEFORE THE  
POSTAL REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, DC 20268-0001

East Vassalboro Post Office  
East Vassalboro, Maine 04935

Docket No. A2012-34

PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS

(January 3, 2012)

On October 25, 2011 the Commission received an appeal from Charles Ferguson and from a group called Save Our Post Office Committee (Petitioners). The Petitioners are concerned about the affect of the closure on the elderly, retired, widowed or disabled who do not drive. They are also concerned about the impact of closing the post office on other local businesses, such as the Country Store, and the farmer's market.

The Petitioners also raise concerns about the Postal Service's calculation of economic savings. The Petitioners explain that some postal customers who rent post office boxes in East Vassalboro are unlikely to rent post office boxes in North Vassalboro, which will have a negative impact on the Postal Service's revenue. The Petitioners also believe that packages will now be sent using FedEx and UPS rather than the Postal Service, which will again have a negative impact of Postal Service revenues. In addition, the Petitioners believe the closure of the East Vassalboro Post Office will result in an accelerated shift to electronic communications. Finally, the Petitioners note a local business that sends approximately \$50,000 in postage a year was not included in the total revenue for the East Vassalboro Post Office, and therefore total revenue from the post office was under estimated.

The Postal Service responded to the Petitioners concerns on December 29, 2011 in its Comments Regarding Appeal (Postal Service Comments) and in its Final Determination.<sup>1</sup> The Postal Service highlights the convenience of rural delivery for

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<sup>1</sup> The Final Determination (FD) can be found at Item No. 47 in the Administrative Record (AR).

senior and disabled citizens who will no longer be able to walk to the local Post Office. The Postal Service also notes that the responses to the questionnaires indicate residents would still patronize local businesses. Postal Service Comments at 14.

Concerning economic savings, the Postal Service calculates that discontinuing the Vassalboro Post Office will save an estimated \$28,773 annually. *Id* at 15. In response to the Petitioners claim that one local business, with \$50,000 in postage, was not included in the economic savings calculation, the Postal Service explains that this business no longer brings its meter to the East Vassalboro Post Office, and the North Vassalboro Postal Office and the rural route carrier can handle mail from this business. *Id* at 17. In response to the Petitioners claims that closing the East Vassalboro Post Office will result in an overall decrease in volume and revenue, the Postal Service explains that it is “cognizant of the potential for a decrease in revenue.” *Id* at 18. The Postal Service also does not believe that the potential loss of P.O. Box service will be significant. *Id*. In general, the Postal Service believes that rural route delivery service is more cost-effective for East Vassalboro. *Id*.

The Public Representative finds that the Postal Service has adequately considered the Petitioners concerns, and no persuasive argument has been presented which would prevent the Commission from affirming the Postal Service’s determination to close the East Vassalboro Post Office. The Public Representative concludes that the Postal Service has followed applicable procedures, that the decision to close the East Vassalboro Post Office is neither arbitrary nor capricious, and that the Postal Service's decision is well supported.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Public Representative for  
Docket No. A2012-34

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